

Joshua 5:13-6:27 Killing Giants



Have you encountered any carnal giants in your Christian life this week? Have you killed any of them? Have you encountered some high impenetrable walls you have to crossover?

Many Christians, think they are slaves to the giants in their lives. They do not know they have been set free to love and serve Christ. "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1).

In Romans chapter seven, the Apostle Paul is talking to the regenerate, born again believer. Paul describes for us something that every believer will go through again and again for the rest of his life on this earth. Paul opens his heart and shares with us his own personal feelings. It was not something Paul went through only once and would never have to face again. It is not like he moves on to Romans 8 and never goes back to Romans 7 experiences. Paul went through it again and again in his life because sin has the power to deceive us. Only true believers go through what Paul speaks of here. The unbeliever does not because he is a slave to sin. He is dead in trespasses and sins.

Have you come to the place where you are tired of everything the flesh produces in your Christian life? Are you getting tired of techniques, programs, conferences, videos, and meetings? Have you come to the place where you cast yourself unreservedly on the all sufficiency of Christ and cried out "O wretched man that I am"? You have to come to the end of yourself before the Holy Spirit can take over. You have to come to the end of trying to live the Christian life in your own strength. "I am sick and tired of trying to live the Christian life in the power of the flesh."

It is a sense of spiritual poverty. The immature Christian is characterized by self-confidence. We never move on to spiritual maturity until we come to this sense of poverty in the spirit. In the flesh dwells no good thing. Carnal believers always have an arrogance about them, an obsession with power, position, praise, pride, passion, etc. The Holy Spirit honors that which exalts the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

There is only one way to kill giants. There is only one solution. "God alone through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God!" (Rom. 7:25a, *New English Bible*).

Major Ian Thomas writes candidly: "God has chosen the weak and the base and the nothing, and the things that are not, to confound the things that are, and all God demands of a man is his availability—to be what man was created to be, the human vehicle of the divine life, inhabited by God for God. That God may be Himself. . . What you are is totally irrelevant—nationality-wise, money-wise, family-wise, education-wise, personality-wise, and any other

wise, if only you will recognize the principle that is God that works in you, to will and to do His good-pleasure."

Joshua the human commander and captain of Israel found that to be true.

Let look at the preparation for conquering our giants.

I. PREPARATION FOR CONQUERING OUR GIANTS

Proud and mighty Jericho stood at the entrance to the promises of God. It was a fortified city. Israel looked up at the towering walls of Jericho and saw the towering impossibilities. There was no way under, no way over, no way round, no way through those walls. From the human standpoint it looked hopelessly impossible. Here are these inexperienced Israelites with bows and arrows and sling shots coming to conquer the Canaanites who had battle experience and military equipment to defend themselves.

God's Word gives strength to the believer.

The Lord God told Joshua 1:5, "No one will be able to oppose you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not desert you nor abandon you." That promise gets repeated throughout the book of Joshua.

Have you been making personal application of these great promises in Joshua to your personal life this week? They are just as true today as they were in Joshua's day.

A recent study of 40,000 people "indicated that when people engaged in the Scripture one time a week, which could include a pastor instructing the congregation to 'open your Bibles...', there was negligible effect on some key areas of their life. The same result was true if people engaged in the Scriptures two times a week. The result equaled little to no effect.

"Three times a week saw a small indication of life. There was a slight pulse, a faint heartbeat. Something moved in the behavior of the person engaging in Scripture. The eye opener happened when Bible engagement reached at least four times a week.

"There are profound differences between people who engage the Scriptures at least four times a week and those who engage with Scripture less often.

"A steady climb of impact would have been expected, but that was not the case. The level was basically stagnant over days one and two, with a small bump on day three. But when day four was reached, the effects spiked in an astounding way. The stunning findings included the following:

Feeling lonely drops 30%

Anger issues drop 32%

Bitterness in relationships drops 40%

Alcoholism drops 57%

Sex outside of marriage drops 68%

Feeling spiritually stagnant drops 60%

Viewing pornography drops 61%

Sharing your faith jumps 200%

Discipling others jumps 230%

"The research literally leaps off the charts. The findings hammer home the truth that there are profound differences between people who engage the Scriptures at least four times a week and those who engage with Scripture less often.

"The studies show that the best spiritually based predictor among 13- to 17-year-old teenagers was their engagement in Scripture."

(Quoted in *Insights*, April 30, 2021. Copyright © 2021 · Lifeway Research, a ministry of Lifeway Christian Resources).

Brad invited me join him Wednesday night with our youth. I was excited to hear their testimonies of how their reading the Bible each day had given them victory and strength to face their temptations, trials, and triumphs during the week.

Take a few minutes and spend time in the Word of God every day, and watch how He changes your life. Spend as much time in the bible as you do on Facebook.

Joshua meets the Captain of the LORD God's army.

In Joshua 5:13-15 Joshua was out surveying and planning for his battle for Jericho

"Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, he raised his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, 'Are you for us or for our enemies?' He said, 'No; rather I have come now as captain of the army of the Lord.' And Joshua fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down, and said to him, 'What has my lord to say to his servant?' And the captain of the Lord's army said to Joshua, 'Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.' And Joshua did so" (Joshua 5:13-15, *NASB*).

Joshua asked the wrong question. The man replied, "No; rather I indeed come now *as* captain of the army of the LORD" (v. 14). How often do we go in to God asking the wrong questions? Who is this "captain of the army of the LORD"? Who is leading Israel to conquer the Promised Land?

The word "hosts" in some translations is the unseen army, invisible to the human eye that surrounds the throne of God. This "captain of the army of the LORD" is the angel of the covenant appearing in human form to take command of the armies of Israel. Israel's Joshua is under this captain. Israel's deliverance comes from only one source just as our deliverance comes from only one source—God for us in Christ.

Joshua immediately recognizes the supernatural character of this visitor. "And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, 'What has my lord to say to his servant?'" (v. 14b). Joshua fell on his face and worshiped. Who is this person? It is sin to worship angels and men.

Joshua 5:15, "The captain of the LORD'S army said to Joshua, 'Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.' And Joshua did so." Joshua did not have any problem with obedience. Jesus said, "If you love Me you will keep My commandments." If you love Him you will obey Him. You don't turn 18 and no longer have a need to obey Him. It is a question of love.

Yahweh had come to lead His people to victory. Yahweh is our salvation. The captain of the Lord's host is none other than the Great Captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ. The angel of the covenant of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ in the New Testament. He is Immanuel—God with us. He leads us into the Christian's Promised Land.

You cannot help but make the comparison between Moses and the burning bush and Joshua and the Captain of the host of the LORD.

A promise of God's personal presence always carries with it the assurance of God's personal care and provision. God is not our personal genie. You do not rub your hand over Christ and get whatever your heart's desire. The battle, Joshua is reminded, is the LORD's. We are here to serve Him in His battle for righteousness. We are here to do His will. He is not here to serve us. Christ is our victorious Savior.

You want to defeat your giants, get into God's word daily and walk with your Captain.

The LORD God prepares and leads us into the battle according to His plan against our giants.

II. THE PLAN FOR CONQUERING YOUR GIANTS (JOSHUA 6:1-2)

Joshua 6:1 says, "Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out and no one came in." They had shut the gates and locked themselves in the city of Jericho.

Jericho had two thick walls around it with houses sitting on top of the walls like a fortress. It was fortified. It had a king and valiant warriors.

Have you identified some carnal giants in your life?

Has the Holy Spirit identified some damaging, destructive, sinful giants in your Christian life that you need to conquer? Perhaps He has been putting His finger in your heart over and over again and saying let's work on this sinful attitude, way of thinking or behavior. Who or what are the sinful giants you have hidden behind the walls of your Jericho?

Who is the king of Jericho in your life this week? Perhaps it is legalism. Are you trying to save yourself by your good works? As a Christian are you trying to sanctify yourself with self-effort rather than walking by faith in Christ? Legalism destroys a vibrant, Spirit-filled walk with Christ into Christian maturity. You cannot have the Spirit-controlled life and legalism at the same time.

Perhaps you are dealing with religious arrogance. Are you working on an attitude of religious superiority? Perhaps the Holy Spirit is saying to you it is time to grow up spiritually. Spiritual immaturity is taking its toll on you. Is irresponsibility your giant?

How do you respond to life's events? Is fear and anxiety or depression your giant? Have you arrived at the place where you realize you need to do something about it?

Is there a vicious bombardment of bad attitudes? You have been confronted with them over and over again. The Holy Spirit is saying enough. Here is the one we are going to work on.

Maybe it is the giant of self, just plain old selfishness, greed, covetousness. Always looking out for number one?

Do you grieve the Holy Spirit with anger, bitterness, wrath, clamor, slander, malice, judgmental attitude when He keeps saying to you be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving?

Perhaps your giant is sexual sins, immorality, filthy and foolish talk, or vulgar joking.

The LORD God is holy and His people must be holy. He will not make a truce with sin.

Joshua's victories are pictures of the Christian's victory over sin in our lives. Satan will work to destroy your fellowship with God and your testimony of God's saving grace. He will go to all costs to prevent you from going in and taking possession of all of your inheritance in Jesus Christ. Satan was defeated at Calvary. He knows he is defeated, but he will try his best to take you down with him. He knows he cannot take away your salvation, but he will seek to destroy your testimony and love for Christ. Satan wants you to feel defeated. He wants you to feel powerless. He wants you to feel hopeless in your spiritual life. He wants you to stay at the same spiritual level you are now. Where are you going to be ten years from now in your Christian walk?

Will you make a once and for all commitment to the Lord to take a stand and grow in your sanctification? It begins by making yourself available every day to Him to make you into the

person He wants you to be for His glory. Renew that commitment every morning as you rise for the day.

Moreover, God has promised to lead us from victory to victory. He wants us to depend upon Him and appropriate by faith His victory for us.

How did God view the situation in Jericho?

Joshua 6:2: "But the Lord said to Joshua, 'See, I have handed Jericho over to you, with its king and the valiant warriors.'" From God's perspective Jericho was already defeated. No problem for God.

Triumphant Christian living is not automatic. We must be rightly related to Christ. Our focus must be dependent upon Him for guidance and strength. We must depend upon Him for our daily walk. If we trust our own scheming and planning we will fail. We can not conquer Jericho is our own strength. The key is being strong and the Lord and the strength of His might. The Christian life is an exchanged life. We live it not in our own strength, but in the strength and wisdom of the Lord. We need daily wisdom and guidance to win. We get our strength from His presence and His power.

Joshua took God at His Word. When God told Joshua that Jericho was his, Joshua believed him. He believed God would fulfill His promises of victory. No river was too wide, no situation too difficult, no wall too formidable for the Lord.

Joshua simply waited on God's marching orders (Joshua 6:3-5).

"And you shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight ahead" (Joshua 6:3-5).

The people of Israel obeyed their faithful leader (Joshua 6:6-14).

"So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and have seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of the Lord." Then he said to the people, "Go forward and march around the city, and the armed men shall go on ahead of the ark of the Lord." And it was so, that when Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward and blew the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And the armed men went ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while they continued to blow the trumpets. But Joshua commanded the people,

saying, "You shall not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let a word proceed from your mouth, until the day I tell you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout!" So he had the ark of the Lord taken around the city, circling it once; then they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

"Now Joshua got up early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. Then the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew the trumpets; and the armed men went ahead of them, and the rear guard came after the ark of the Lord, while they continued to blow the trumpets. So the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp; they did the same for six days" (Joshua 6:6-14).

Over the past 40 years Israel did not have a good track record on faith. Moreover, shouting had never toppled a wall before in history.

I wonder what went on in the mind of the people of Jericho behind those walls as they watched this crazy parade day after day for six days. Here was a perfect picture of psychological warfare. God was at work in Jericho.

God prepares us according to His plan to fulfill His eternal purpose in and through us.

III. THE PROMISE OF GOD FULFILLED AGAINST GIANTS (JOSHUA 6:16-20).

"Then on the seventh day they got up early at the dawning of the day and marched around the city in the same way seven times; only on that day did they march around the city seven times. And at the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city" (Joshua 6:15-16).

The people of Israel could say, "I saw God do it!"

"So the people shouted, and the priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, everyone straight ahead, and they took the city" (Joshua 6:20).

God has given us the land; let's go get it! But we have to kill some giants along the way.

Since God did it there, He can do it here.

J. Sidlow Baxter writes: "Faith's first rule of action is to ascertain the will and word of God. Faith's second rule of action is to obey that will and word implicitly. Faith's final rule of action is to reckon on that word, and count the thing as good as done, giving glory to God in anticipation. . ."

SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. God still keeps His promises. He has not changed.

Get into God's Word daily and claim His promises and watch Him kill some giants and overcome walls of defeat in your life.

Isaiah 26:3-4 says, "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace,

Because he trusts in You.

Trust in the Lord forever,

For in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock."

Or as the KJV reads: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" because he trusts in Thee."

Philippians 4:19, "And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer person is decaying, yet our inner person is being renewed day by day. For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

1 Cor. 10:12-13, "Therefore let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall. No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."

2. Believe and act on God's promises by faith.

Faith in the Lord plus action can tear down every towering impossibility and kill every giant.

Faith is always talking. Faith speaks. "Yes, that wall in Jericho is a monstrous thing. The outer wall is six feet thick and inner wall is 12 feet thick, but the Lord can take that thing down. The Lord can deliver us from some Jericho in Dixie. I saw God do it, and I shall see Him do it again." Faith speaks, "But what if it really is true that God can ..."

3. What is the wall or giant you are looking at right now?

Has that giant become so enlarged in your imagination that you can see nothing else? Can you see a glimmer of hope beyond the wall? How big is your God? Get eternity into the picture.

4. Obey the Word of God.

Obey what you know to be God's will at the present moment. Do what you know to be the right thing to God. Obey the Word of God.

Make yourself available to the Lord moment by moment, one day at a time. When you are in the will of God one day at a time you are always in the will of God.

Lord I make myself available to you to do in and through me whatever you are pleased to do that will bring glory to your name.

Holy Spirit of God I make myself available to you. Break me, cleanse me, fashion me and mold me into the image, character and likeness of Christ.

I want to make myself available to all the Father makes available to me.